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Identical letters dated 13 September 2013 from the Permanent Representative of the Syrian Arab Republic to the United Nations addressed to the Secretary-General and the President of the Security Council

On instructions from my Government, I write with reference to the claims made in the letter dated 28 August 2013 from the Permanent Representative of Israel to the President of the Security Council (S/2013/514) regarding the monthly Security Council briefing on the situation in the Middle East, which was held on 20 August 2013. I should like to draw attention to the following information.

Firstly, it is well known that the item "The situation in the Middle East" has historically addressed ways to enforce United Nations resolutions, including Security Council resolutions, concerning ending the Israeli occupation of Arab territories, including the occupied Syrian Golan, in line with the borders of 4 June 1967, in addition to bringing an end to Israel's violations of international humanitarian law, human rights law and other international instruments, with a view to achieving a just and comprehensive peace in the region in accordance with the recognized terms of reference for peace. The contents of the Israeli letter are a desperate attempt on the part of the Permanent Representative of Israel to deflect the Council's deliberations from the core of the item, to cover up Israel's crimes against Arab civilians under occupation, and to obscure Israel's refusal to implement hundreds of United Nations resolutions on the subject. It is preposterous that the Israeli occupation authorities should hold forth on human rights crises in other States and the use of internationally prohibited weapons, particularly in the light of Israel's own atrocities, most recently in Gaza a few years ago. Israel has used white phosphorus against Palestinians and displaced them. It has displaced Syrians from the occupied Syrian Golan, and its inhumane practices against that population have been documented by the relevant United Nations committees.

Secondly, Israel is directly involved in the events in Syria. The Israeli occupation authorities are assisting and supporting terrorist groups in the area of separation in the Golan. They have transported wounded terrorists over the line of separation to Israeli hospitals, where they received treatment before being returned to Syrian territory, again over the line of separation, in order to resume their terrorist activities in the region. Not only does Israel's assistance of the terrorists blatantly violate the 1974 Disengagement of Forces Agreement, the mandate of the United Nations Disengagement Observer Force (UNDOF) and international law; it also hinders the work of United Nations forces stationed in the area and places their lives at risk. Indeed, the terrorist groups have abducted UNDOF peacekeepers on several occasions.

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Thirdly, and lastly, we emphasize that the forthcoming monthly briefing of the Secretariat on the situation in the Middle East should focus on the occupied Syrian Golan. Israel still refuses to return that territory to the motherland, Syria, or to comply with the authoritative international resolutions, particularly Security Council resolution 497 (1981). It is surprising and unacceptable that the briefings of the Secretariat should ignore Israel's continuing occupation of the Golan and its ongoing grave violations of international law, as if the former had never happened or the latter had come to an end! It is as if the Syrians in the occupied Golan, who live under the most heinous form of occupation, did not deserve so much as a modicum of the attention that the Secretariat gives to the situation in Syria in its briefings!

I should be grateful if the present letter could be issued as an official document of the Security Council.

(*Signed*) Bashar **Ja'afari**
Ambassador
Permanent Representative